

CWCA Board of Directors Meeting

January 17, 2020

Present: Clare Bermingham (Vice President); Nadine Fladd (Secretary); Jordana Garbati (Treasurer) Sarah King (President); Stephanie Bell (Digital Media Chair); Brian Hotson (Membership Chair); Frédérique Offredi (Francophone Representative); Heather Fitzgerald (Past-President); Michelle Hartley (Conference Chair); Brock MacDonald (acting CASDW Representative), Holly Salmon (Member-at-Large)

Regrets: Andrea Williams (CASDW Representative); Liv Marken (Member-at-Large)

1. Call to order:

The meeting is called to order at 12:32pm EDT.

2. Approval of agenda (Sarah):

Approved as amended.

3. Approval of minutes (Sarah):

Approved as amended.

4. Conference 2020 (London) planning (Michelle):

Communications:

- Stephanie has uploaded everything that the conference committee has shared with her to the website

Schedule:

- The conference schedule is on the excel sheet in the Google drive – thanks to Clare and Mandy. Clare and Mandy will forward this information to Stephanie to publish
- The pre-conference workshop has been confirmed, but the title of the talk has not been confirmed. It will take place from 4:00pm to 5:30pm at Huron. Dinner will follow. Michelle will ask Mandy if The Root Cellar is suitable for mingling

Sponsorships:

- This aspect of conference prep is still in the works. Michelle has a cheque from WC Online that she will mail to Jordana to deposit
- Broadview has agreed to have a table on the first day of the conference and to purchase a full-page ad in the program
- Michelle is still talking to other publishers
- Michelle asked about the specs for ads. This information should exist in the conference program folder in the Google drive. Heather will send this information to Michelle

Presentation Proposals:

- Proposals are coming in! They are due January 20
- Stephanie will use sharing information about the pre-conference workshop as an “excuse” to remind potential presenters about the deadline
- Jordana asked if anyone had reached out to the local colleges. Brian has shared the information with 500 people

on the mailing list, but Jordana will reach out to colleagues at Conestoga and Michelle will reach out to Fanshawe

- CASDW and STELHE proposals are also due on January 20th
- Clare thinks that we have enough proposal reviewers: we have received between 40 and 50 proposals in previous years

ACTION ITEMS:

Clare and Mandy: Send conference schedule information to Stephanie for website

Michelle: Find out if The Root Cellar will work for mingling at dinner

Michelle: Send WC Online cheque to Jordana

Heather: Send conference ad specs to Michelle

Michelle and Jordana: Reach out to Fanshawe and Conestoga to encourage people to submit proposals

5. President's Report (Sarah):

Sarah welcomed Brock MacDonald, who was representing CASDW at this meeting. Sarah explained that she had a colleague from University of Toronto with a Contractually Limited-Term Appointment (CLTA) contact her to ask about best practices re: staffing, embedded writing programs, etc. This interaction was a good reminder of the value of the CWCA position statement on writing centres and staffing that is currently in progress.

Sarah also reflected on the fact that CWCA had its first ever abstention in Board vote during the December meeting. She explained that while disagreement is not always easy or comfortable, she sees it as a good thing. People join the CWCA Board because they have ideas, thoughts and opinions; it's how we deal with this disagreement that matters. This disagreement can continue to be productive as long as we deal with each other with respect.

6. Treasurer's Report (Jordana):

- The ePly registration form for the conference is posted. Let Jordana know if you see errors
- One membership and one conference registration have come in since Jordana's last report
- Website renewal. Jordana has given Stephanie the credit card information to upgrade the website
- Account Balances:
 - BMO: \$9689.98
 - PayPal: \$542.08

7. Georgia Lyons bursary (Jordana):

Jordana had a number of questions about how disbursing the bursary could work. She walked the Board through her draft document and we discussed potential answers to her questions.

Past Donors:

Jordana asked if we will be recognizing donors who have contributed to the bursary. This raised a question: do we have a complete list of donors? One option is to contact past donors and ask if they would like to be recognized. Sarah thought that this seemed like a lot of work. She suggested that asking this question when new donors contribute is possible, but that we should keep our recognition of past donors more general for this year.

Future Donors:

Brian has a list of institutions who had agreed to donate money to the bursary, including Nipissing. Heather suggested asking Nipissing (Lyons' former institution) to make a contribution on an ongoing basis or a larger nest egg contribution. Former Board member Lindsey Voisin might be a useful person to talk to about this. Nipissing already has a Georgia Lyons bursary of its own.

Right now the only way to donate is through conference registration. Jordana asked if we should create a separate

donation button on the CWCA website. Brian also suggested that funds raised from table sponsorships could go towards the bursary fund in the future.

Disbursement Goal:

We currently have \$900.00 earmarked for the bursary. After a discussion, the Board settled on disbursing one bursary up to a maximum of \$250.00 for 2020. Brock pointed out that CASDW keeps the information about the value of its bursaries vague; the executive then reviews the applications and its available funds and makes decisions.

Heather wondered if people who contribute to the bursary fund are contributing in memory of Georgia Lyons, or simply to support students. She suggested that one option is to award the full \$900.00 that we have collected so far as a one-time bursary and then collect money for “student travel grants” (without using Georgia Lyons’ name) going forward. This change would likely require a vote at the next AGM.

Application Process:

Since applicants must have an accepted proposal to present at the conference to be eligible for the bursary, bursary applications will be due after participants have been notified about their proposal acceptance (by February 20th). The notification message should include information about both the bursary and the travel grants. Heather suggested that Holly and Jordana might adjudicate both the travel grant and bursary applications, with the goal of developing a “one-stop” process that can be re-used each year since the travel grants tend to get forgotten about in conference planning.

Honouring Georgia Lyons:

Brock suggested reviewing the old Inkshed website for photos of Lyons, and talking to her family to find out more about her so that we can speak to this when we present the bursary.

ACTION ITEMS:

Jordana: Coordinate with Holly re: Georgia Lyons process and travel grants process

All (especially Brock): Send contact information of people who knew Georgia Lyons to Jordana

Conference Committee: Make sure information about bursary and travel grants gets included with acceptance emails

8. Report on Strategic Planning (Sarah/Heather/Clare):

The committee has not met since December’s update. They are looking for feedback on the survey that will go out to membership.

ACTION ITEMS:

All: Send feedback on survey to Sarah/Heather/Clare

9. Statement on Writing Centres (Sarah and Brian):

The committee has circulated a draft statement and received feedback from some members of the committee. Sarah has been asked if CWCA plans to translate the statement into French. Heather pointed out that this task might require re-positioning the statement for a slightly different context, not just simple translation. Brock pointed out that CASDW is officially bilingual, and after the meeting sent along some examples of institutions in Québec that are doing writing centre work in French.

10. Report from CASDW Representative (Brock on behalf of Andrea):

Brock said that he is very excited to hear that progress is being made on the position statement and is looking forward to seeing it. Folks from CASDW are excited about the CWCR blog! The work it publishes will be of interest to both groups. CASDW will be applying for funding from the Federation for a cross-association event of some kind at Congress again. The potential funding will allow for food to be served: likely a lunch. Stephanie suggested that the joint session topic could focus on publication, and highlight CJS DWR and CWCR.

11. Report on the CWCR Blog (Brian):

The blog was officially launched on January 13th, with a welcome message from Sarah King, CWCA/ACCR President. The blog may be found here: <https://cwcaaccr.com/cwcr-rccr-blog/>

1. Communication

- CWCR/RCRR is always open to proposals in any format and on any topic relating to writing centres
- Periodically, we will be sending out announcements through our communication channels to ask for submissions
- Each blog post will be announced via our communications channels.

2. Formatting for blog now complete

- Central menu tab connects to the blog where posts are available.
- Drop-down menu offers stable links to the blog CFP

3. First postings

- Sarah provided an introduction and welcome message from the president and board to the new blog.
- This will remain as a static page
- A second piece, profiling Millwood High School's writing centre, will be posted in late January

4. Posting schedule

- Post are now planned or promised in to May
- Opportunities for adding posts as issues arise are available, such as announcements, CFPs, etc.

The Pilcrow retreat is listed on the website. A soft launch has happened through twitter and the listserv. Brian, Liv and Stephanie are waiting until after the January 20 deadline for conference proposals to promote the retreat more aggressively.

12. Digital Media Chair report

See Stephanie's complete report (Appendix A).

Stephanie has analyzed our web traffic and pointed out that it peaked in 2017 because Brian was blogging on the website then and that drove views. Since then the number of unique visitors has remained stable but the number of times those people visit the site has decreased. Stephanie doesn't think that that we need to be worried about these web traffic patterns. However, the new blog will likely help to drive traffic and will allow CWCA to post job ads without worrying about having to remove them down when postings close.

Stephanie asked the Board to work as a team on twitter: it's useful when Board members share the CWCA account's tweets.

13. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 12:58pm EDT

Next meetings:

February 14, 12:30 to 2:00pm

March 20, 12:30 to 2:00pm

April 24, 12:30 to 2:00pm

May 15, 12:30 to 2:00pm

Distribution: Nadine Fladd, Mandy Penney, Heather Fitzgerald, Jordana Garbati, Brian Hotson, Stephanie Bell, Clare

Bermingham, Sarah King, Liv Marken, Holly Salmon, Andrea Williams, Michelle Hartley, Vidya Natarajan, Frédérique Offredi, Brian MacDonald

Appendix A: Digital Media Chair Report

Digital Media Chair's Report

Prepared by Stephanie Bell

January 17, 2020

Website Updates & Info

All conference-related pages updated:

- CFP
- Keynote speakers
- Registration
- Travel and tourism
- Accommodations

Pages that still require updating:

- Travel grants
- Conference schedule

Archives page updated with past conference programs and CFPs

(this page recently deleted and has had to be restored. Let me know if you see any issues with it. Please send any website updates to me so we can avoid issues like this!)

Page for CWCA special issues of CJSW/r created as drop-down item from CWCA Conference menu tab. 2018 issue featured and 2019 CFP posted. Explore it here:

<https://cwcaaccr.com/conference-publications/>

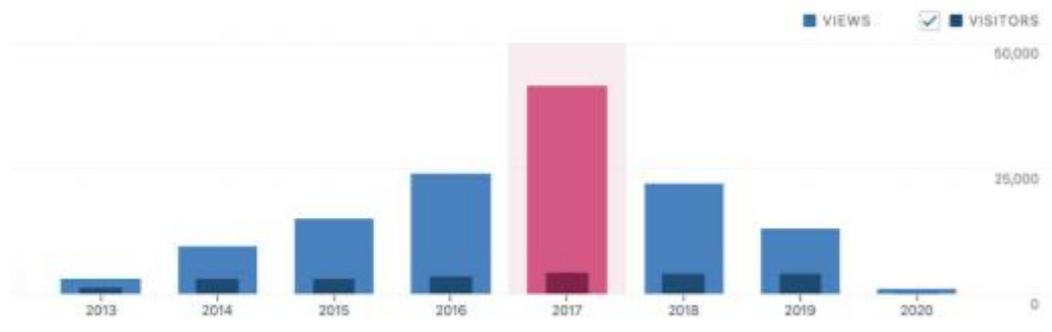
Blog tab created with link to blog, and drop-down menu items for the blog CFP and Pilcrow Studio Retreat CFP

Website Statistics

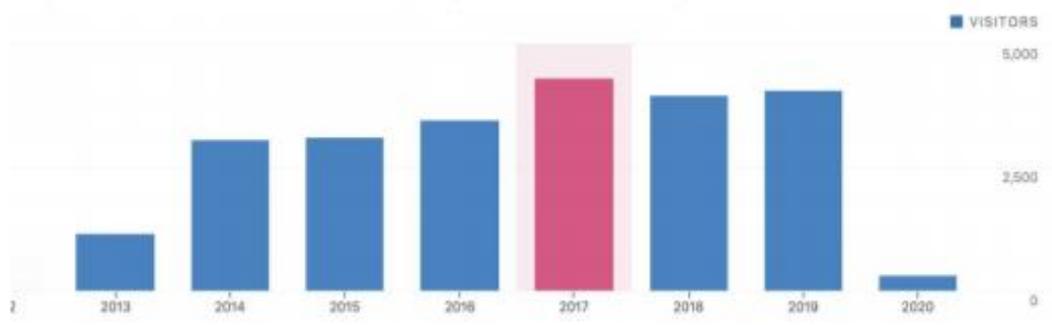
Table 1: Number of website views & visitors

| Month | 2018/19 Views, visitors | 2019/20 Views, visitors |
|----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| October | 756, 304 | 965, 242 |
| November | 845, 291 | 860, 308 |
| December | 1068, 368 | 861, 286 |
| January | 1485, 449 | 803, 278 *up to Jan 17 |

Graph 1: Peak website traffic in 2017, with rates of views falling steadily



Graph 2: Number of website visitors per year remains relatively stable



Brian Hotson, previous website manager, has clarified that in 2017 he began updating the website regularly with posts ranging from job postings to summaries of and links to WLN blog posts (which he began editing in 2017). This is the cause of the spikes in website traffic.

Hopefully the new CWCR/RCCR blog initiative will improve number of website views. Increased traffic to the website might lead to greater awareness of and engagement in the CWCA/ACCR.

Twitter

Regular twitter activity involving sharing resources, engaging in conversations about writing centre studies, and posting updates about the conference CFP, the blog, and the Pilcrow Studio Retreat.

Participating in the community of writing centre professionals on twitter is important for the CWCA. On twitter, it is possible to see updated programming from writing centres as well as information about the evolving interests of writing centre professionals.

Involvement of CWCA board members on Twitter can help spread CWCA/ACCR event and publication information. If you're not on Twitter, this is a good reason to consider joining.

Dates of major announcements on Twitter (not including a dozen reminders of the CWCA/ACCR conference!):

- January 13: CWCR/RCCR launch with Sarah King's inaugural post
<https://twitter.com/CWCAssoc/status/1216782726466064384?s=20>
- December 19: Pilcrow Studio Retreat Announcement
<https://twitter.com/CWCAssoc/status/1207735682774515712?s=20>
- December 9: keynote speakers announcement
<https://twitter.com/CWCAssoc/status/1204055912895397894?s=20>
- November 5: Blog CFP
<https://twitter.com/CWCAssoc/status/1191701830486630400?s=20>
- December 10: CWCA special issue of CJSW/r
<https://twitter.com/CWCAssoc/status/1204486043388596224?s=20>
- October 21: CWCA/RCCR Conference CFP
<https://twitter.com/CWCAssoc/status/1186385122569965568?s=20>

Twitter Statistics

1115 Followers

Table 2: Twitter statistics by Month

| | Tweets | Profile Visits | New followers | Tweet impressions | Mentions |
|---------------|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------|----------|
| January 2020 | 5 | 20 | 6 | 4.2k | 6 |
| December 2019 | 12 | 117 | 6 | 10.9k | 12 |
| November 2019 | 8 | 110 | 4 | 9.7k | 3 |
| October 2019 | 71 (1 live-tweeted from the AWELL conference) | 155 | 7 | 16.5k | 31 |
| September | 3 | 32 | 5 | 6k | 9 |

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|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 2019 *data for this month may not be exact due to a service outage | | | | | |
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